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SUBJECT: UNITED KINGDOM - 2003 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 301352

11. (U) This telegram contains Embassy London's contributions to the 2003 "Patterns of Global Terrorism" Report. Embassy input is keyed to reftel questions.

12. (U) A) SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS TAKEN BY HOST GOVERNMENTS TO SUPPORT THE GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM, PARTICULARLY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST AL QAIDA OPERATIVES, BUT INCLUDING DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AND ACTIONS TO BLOCK TERRORIST ASSETS, ENACT NEW COUNTER TERRORISM LAWS, AND RATIFY EXISTING TREATIES.

-- The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act (2001) provides UK authorities with the power to detain indefinitely foreign nationals suspected of being international terrorists, but who cannot be removed from the UK immediately. Since the act came into force in December 2001, 16 foreign nationals have been detained using its powers. Of the total detained, two have voluntarily left the UK. The others remain in detention. The names of the detainees are not public.

-- Between October 2002 and October 2003, the UK issued 25 terrorist asset freeze orders against 74 individuals and 15 organizations. Two of the orders implemented the European Union's September 2003 decision to freeze all funds, other financial assets, and economic resources of Hamas.

-- The UK did not enact major new counter terrorism legislation in 2003. The UK has ratified all 12 UN Counter Terrorism Conventions.

13. (U) B) DESCRIBE THE RESPONSE OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM OF THE UK TO ACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND/OR SIGNIFICANT ACTS OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM DURING 2003, INCLUDING ANY HOST GOVERNMENT PROSECUTIONS RELATING TO TERRORISM. PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ACTIONS REGARDING ACTS OF TERRORISM AGAINST OR AFFECTING U.S. CITIZENS OR FACILITIES.

-- UK security and law enforcement authorities have disrupted numerous terrorist attacks by dissident Irish republican, particularly the Real Irish Republican Army (RIRA) and the Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA) as well as loyalist paramilitary groups. In one significant disruption, the Police Service of Northern Ireland intercepted a 1,200 pound car bomb in Londonderry in June that was linked to the REAL IRA.

-- HMG continues its investigation of the 1998 bombing in Omagh, which killed 29 people.

-- Between October 2002 and October 2003, 59 new terrorism-related cases have been presented to the Crown Prosecution Service by the police, either for advice on whether or how to proceed with the investigation or for prosecution.

-- On April 1, 2003, a jury in Leicestershire convicted Brahim Benmerzouga and Baghdad Mezaine on charges related to terrorist fund raising. The two were sentenced to 11 years in jail.

-- In connection with a long-running investigation into a group of North Africans involved in the production/importation of toxins, including ricin, into the

UK, UK authorities have charged nine individuals with conspiracy to murder and other related charges. Trials for the nine are scheduled to begin in April and September 2004. One of the individuals, Kamel Borgass, has been charged with the murder of Greater Manchester Police Officer Stephen Oake, who was attacked and killed during a January 14 raid connected with the investigation.

14. (U) C) DID THE UK EXTRADITE OR REQUEST THE EXTRADITION OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS FOR PROSECUTION DURING THE YEAR? PARTICULAR ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO HOST GOVERNMENT RESPONSES TO U.S. REQUESTS FOR EXTRADITION OR ASSISTANCE IN TERRORIST CASES.

-- A bilateral Extradition Treaty, which entered into force on January 21, 1977, and a Supplementary Treaty, which entered into force on December 23, 1986, govern extradition between the U.S. and the UK.

-- The U.S. and UK completed negotiation on a new Extradition Treaty in 2003, which will streamline the extradition process. The new treaty has not yet been ratified by either country, however.

-- There have been no terrorism-related extraditions in the past year to the U.S.

-- The UK continues to assist with the U.S. request for the extradition of Khaled Al-Fawwaz, Adel Abdel Bary, and Ibrahim

Eidarus to the U.S. for their involvement in the bombing of the U.S. Embassies in East Africa. In December 2001, the Law Lords, the UK's highest court, rejected their appeal to block the extradition. These cases then passed to the Home Secretary for final decision as to whether these individuals would be extradited. However, all three exercised their legal right to make representations to the Home Secretary against their surrender to the U.S. Those representations gave rise to a set of inquiries on a range of issues from the Home Office to the U.S., which were made in March 2002. In the intervening 18 months, there has been regular contact between U.S. officials and the Home Office, including replies to some, though not all, UK inquiries.

-- The U.S. has also requested the extradition of Abu Doha in connection with the December 1999 plot by Ahmed Ressam and others to attack Los Angeles International Airport. The U.S. request survived the judicial stages of the UK extradition process. As in the case of the Embassy bombers, his case is also now before the Home Secretary. Doha made representations against his surrender in January 2003. These were sent to U.S. officials in May for reply.

15. (U) D) DESCRIBE ANY SIGNIFICANT IMPEDIMENTS TO UK GOVERNMENT PROSECUTION AND/OR EXTRADITION OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS.

-- It is UK policy to prosecute and/or extradite suspected terrorists consistent with UK law, the European Convention on Human Rights, and the 1951 Convention on Refugees. UK law requires prima facie evidence in support of an extradition request and does not allow extradition to occur where the request is believed to be made for the purpose of punishing a person on account of his/her race, religion or political opinion. UK law does not allow the extradition of individuals if they would face the death penalty where there is the possibility that the sentence may be carried out. In death penalty cases, the UK would seek assurances that the sentence would be waived before agreeing to extradition.

-- In November 2002, the Government introduced legislation to streamline and shorten the UK extradition process. It became law in November 2003 and eliminates duplication of hearings and appeals that were part of the old system. The legislation also simplifies the rules on authenticating foreign documents so that faxed documents would be accepted as valid. However, cases that were pending under the old system must be completed under the old rules.

¶16. (U) E) DISCUSS UK RESPONSES OTHER THAN PROSECUTION. THESE WOULD INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO, PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR OFFICIAL NEWS AGENCIES FOLLOWING A TERRORIST INCIDENT (IN OR OUTSIDE THE UK) AND EFFORTS BY THE UK TO INVESTIGATE TERRORIST INCIDENTS OR TO ASSIST WITH INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM INVESTIGATIONS.

-- The UK regularly condemns terrorist attacks, and this practice continued in 2003. The UK condemned the May 2003 Al Qaida terrorist attacks in Casablanca and Riyadh and the attacks in Iraq against the Jordanian Embassy, the United Nations, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The UK also condemned the separate attacks in November on two synagogues and the British Consulate and a British bank in Istanbul.

-- The UK regularly engages in public diplomacy aimed at highlighting the global nature of the threat posed by the al-Qaida network and urging other countries to respond vigorously to terrorist incidents and threats.

-- UK law enforcement officials have assisted with investigations into the 2003 terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, the 2002 attack in Bali, and the 2003 suicide attacks by British nationals in Israel. In Israel, UK authorities have worked closely with Israeli authorities on all aspects of the investigation, and in May 2003, the UK charged two UK resident with terrorism-related offences in connection with the suicide attack. Finally, UK law enforcement is working closely with Turkish authorities on the investigations into the November 2003 Istanbul bombings.

¶17. (U) F) DESCRIBE MAJOR COUNTER TERRORISM EFFORTS UNDERTAKEN IN 2003 BY THE UK, INCLUDING STEPS TAKEN IN INTERNATIONAL FORA.

-- The UK actively campaigns in international fora, including the EU, NATO, OSCE, G-8, and United Nations, for coordinated global efforts to combat terrorism and routinely lobbies UN Member States to ratify the twelve international conventions and protocol relating to terrorism.

-- The UK actively supported efforts to broaden categories of man portable air defense systems under the Waasenaar Arrangement in order to ensure that these systems do not fall into the hands of terrorists.

-- The UK supported the G-8's 2003 initiative to create the Counter Terrorism Action Group (CTAG) and is an active CTAG participant.

-- In addition, the UK launched a new assistance program in 2003 aimed at increasing international capacity to counter terrorism and other threats in support of UK's bilateral and multilateral counter terrorism policy objectives. The program is focused on countries and issues assessed to present the greatest threat to the UK interests. The UK anticipates spending approximately 4 million BPS in UK fiscal year 2003/04 on projects in three major categories: (1) Operational counter terrorism assistance aimed as counter terrorism experts in foreign governments, police and military; (2) Assistance to support the work of the UN's Counter Terrorism Committee, and; (3) Wider capacity building initiatives.

¶18. (U) G) DESCRIBE ANY SIGNIFICANT UK SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, TERRORISTS OR TERRORIST GROUPS.

-- The UK does not provide support for international terrorism, terrorists or terrorist groups.

¶19. (U) H) HAS THE UK MADE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF A TERRORIST-SUPPORTING COUNTRY ON A TERRORISM ISSUE?

-- The UK has not made any public statements in support of a terrorist-supporting country on a terrorism issue and

consistently and strongly condemns all acts of and support for terrorism.

¶10. I) DESCRIBE ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE SINCE 2002, POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE, IN THE UK'S ATTITUDE TOWARD TERRORISM, INTERNATIONAL OR DOMESTIC.

-- There has been no significant change since 2002. The UK has been and remains one of the United States' strongest allies in the fight against terrorism. Elimination of terrorism as a force in international affairs is a primary objective of UK foreign policy.

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Johnson